

A
DECLARATION
AND AN
INFORMATION

From us the People of God called

QUAKERS,

To the present Governors, the

KING

and Both Houses of

PARLIAMENT,

And all whom it may Concern.

*This was Delivered into the Kings hand, the 22. day of the Fourth
Moneth by*

M. F.

L O N D O N,

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WE who are the People of God called Quakers, who are hated and despised, and every where spoken against, as people not fit to live, as they were that went before us, (a) who were of the same Spirit, power, & Life

(a) 1 Cor.
4. 9, 10, 11,
12, 13.

(b) Gal. 4.

and were as we are, in that they were accounted as the off-scouring of all things, by that Spirit and Nature that is of the world,

and so the Scripture is fulfilled, (b) *he that is born of the flesh persecuteth him that is born of the Spirit.* We have been a suffering people,

under every Power & Change, and under every profession of Religion that hath been, & born the outward power in the Nation these 12

years, since we were a People, and being that throw the old Enemy which hath continually appeared against us, not only in the profane people of the Nation, but also in the highest profession of sorts

and sects of Religion, we have suffered under, and been persecuted by them all; Even some persecuted & prisoned till death; others

their bodies bruised till death, stigmatized, bored thorn the tongue, gagged in the mouth, stockt, and whipt thorn Towns & Cities, our goods

spoiled, our bodies two or three years imprisoned, with much more that might be said, which is well known to the Actors thereof; and

this done not for the wronging of any man, nor for the breach of any just Law of the Nation, nor for evil doing, nor desiring any evil,

or wishing any hurt to any man, but for Conscience sake towards God, because we could not bow to their worship, and because we could

not maintain a Ministry, which Ministry we could not joyn with nor own; So we look upon it to be unjust to maintain them, we receive

nothing from, nor cannot trust our Souls under their Teaching, who Teach for hire, and Divine for money, which the Prophets of the

Lord cryed wo against; And Christ said a hireling was a Thief and a Robber, (c) and would fly because he was an hireling; And they are

(c) Joh. 10. 12, 13.

maintained by Tithes, contrary to Christ and the Apostles Doctrine, (d) who said the Priesthood was changed that took Tithes, and the

(d) Heb. 7. 12.

Law also that gave them, and who witnessed CHRIST JESUS to be the Everlasting Offering once for all, who saith, such an High-Priest hath become us which is holy, harmlesse, undefiled, separate from

sinners, and made higher then the Heavens, who in the dayes of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong cries

and Tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was

heard

heard in that he feared, though he was a Slave yet learned he obedience, by the things which he suffered, (e) And being made perfect became the Author of Eternal Salvation unto all them that obey him. And for obedience to him and his commands (do we suffer) who hath said swear not at all, (f) And he said Call no man Master upon earth, for ye have one Master in Heaven; and who hath said How can you believe that seek Honour one of another, and not the Honour that comes from God onely, and who hath said let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay, Nay, for whatsoever is more then this cometh of evil; And because we cannot respect persons, which is contrary to the Apostles Doctrine and practise, who hath said, (g) of a True God is no respecter of Persons, but in every Nation he that feareth God, and worketh Righteousnesse is accepted of him; And the Apostle James exhorted his Brethren not to have the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ with respect of persons, for if you respect persons you commit sin, and are convinced of the Law as Transgressors, and contrary to this Faith and Doctrine we are made Transgressors by the Powers of the Earth, because we cannot respect persons, and commit sin, and be made Transgressors of the Law of God: And this hath been the onely ground and cause of our sufferings, because we obeyed the Command of Christ, the Author of our Eternal salvation, and observed the Apostles Doctrine and practise, and not for any other cause or end have our sufferings been, but for Conscience sake, because we cannot bow to mens wills and worships contrary to the Command of Christ Jesus our Everlasting Priest, King and Prophet, whom we serve with our spirits, and worship in that, which the World calls Heresie (h.)

(e) Heb. 5. 7 & 9.

(f) Mat. 23. 34. 35. Jam. 5. 12. Jam. 2. 10.

(g) 1 Cor. 10. 24. Mat. 22. 16.

(h) Act. 24. 14.

And now because that several of you, who are most concerned in this Government are not acquainted with our principles and practices, neither have known our Innocency and sufferings, and the Old Enemy by whom we have suffered, at this time being ready to incense and instigate, and insuse secretly into the minds of them, who are strangers to us, against whom we have not transgressed, neither do we desire to give any just occasion of offence to these present Governors, who yet have not done us much wrong, in making any Law against us, that we know of; And we do believe would not, if ye did rightly understand our Innocency and Integrity, nakedness and singleness in our carriage towards all men upon the face of the earth, and if ye would but examine and search out our carriage and behaviour towards all mens persons, Souls and Estates, if these things were searched out and Examined

thorow the Nations, and that no prejudice were let into your minds from others words, which proceed from secret envy, malice and hatred, & not from any just ground they have against us, but as it is from a contrary spirit and mind, as it was in the Jews against Christ, and in all others against the Apostles, so it is the same now against us, but this we commit to the Lord who will plead our cause, and clear our Innocency, who hath said *vengeance is Mine, and I will repay it*; And now that they know we cannot swear, nor take an Oath for Conscience sake, but have suffered because we could not take them; Now do the Magistrates of several Countyes of the Nation, through the suggestion of the Priests envy, which is inveterate against us, Tender us an Oath, which they call the Oath of Allegiance, with several other Engagements, what their own wils can invent, on purpose to enslave us, that upon the denial thereof they may cast us into prison, & have already cast several of us into prison at their own pleasure.

We do therefore declare to take of all Jealousies, Fears and Suspitions of our Truth and Fidelity to the King, and these present Governours, that our intentions & Endeavours are and shall be Good, True, Honest and Peaceable towards them, and that we do Love, Own, and Honour the King and these present Governours, so far as they do rule for God and his Truth, and do not impose anything upon Peoples Consciences, but let the Gospel have its free passage through the consciences of men, which we do not know that they have (by any Law) as yet imposed; And if they grant liberty of Conscience towards God and towards Man, then we know that God will bless them: For want of which hath been the overthrow of all that went before them: We do not desire any liberty that may justly offend any ones Conscience, but the Liberty we do desire is, that we may keep our Consciences clear and void of effence towards God and towards men, and that we may enjoy our civil Rights and Liberties of Subjells, as freeborn English men And this we do in the presence of the Lord declare, not in flattering Titles, but in reality and truth of our hearts, and shall manifest the same; Now that we may be clear in the presence of the living God, and of all just and moderate men, that they may not have their hands in Blood and Persecution, as those have had that are gone before, and that they may not be ignorant of us, and of our principles and practice, & so receive information against us from others envy, which may be contrary to our very principles, and the truth as it is in Jesus; Therefore that we may be free from
the

the blood of all men, (i) & that they may not have a hand in Persecuting and Oppressing the Innocent, whose cause God hath pleaded and will plead. We do therefore inform the Governors of this Nation high and low; That we are a People that desire the good of all People and their peace, and desire that all may be saved, and come to the knowledge of the Truth (k,) the Way and the Life, which is Christ Jesus, the Everlasting Covenant, which is given for a Light to the Gentiles, and to be the Salvation to the ends of the Earth, and all the Nations that are saved must walk in this Light of the Glorious Gospel, which hath shined in our hearts, and given us the light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ. And to this Light we direct Peoples minds, that every one in particular may have a Teacher and Testimony according to the Righteousness of Faith which speaketh on this wise; The word is very nigh in the heart and in the mouth. (l) And if every one would come to this, there would be a feeling of Gods Justice and Righteousness, and our intents to be just Innocent and Righteous, who hath said, I will come near to Judgement, and be a swift witness against the Sorcerer and Adulterer, and false swearer (m).

Now if every one would turn to this witness in their own Consciences, this would keep from oppressing and persecuting of others without cause, for God is coming to teach his People himself, by his own Light and Spirit, who hath said, it is written in your law, you shall be all taught of God, (n) which many of us now do witness; for which cause are we persecuted, the children of the Lord are taught of the Lord, and are established in Righteousness, and are far from Oppression. (o)

The Testimony that we have born, hath been chiefly against the Priests, Teachers and Professors of these Nations, that are out of the Life & power; for when it pleased the Lord to reveal his Son in us, we saw them to be absolute deceivers of the People and betrayers of their souls, for they lead them wholly from that of God in them to the letter of the Scripture without them, and to their own Inventions and Imaginations and meanings which they speak, who are not taught of God themselves For, for all their high profession, there is scarce one of them that dares say they have the infallible Spirit of God, the same as the Apostles had, that gave forth the Scripture; The Apostle saith that which may be known of God is manifested in them, for God shews it unto them. No People can retain God in their knowledge and worship him as God, but first they must

(i) Act. 20.
26.

(k) 1 Tim
2.4.
Act. 13. 47.
Rev. 21. 24
2 Cor. 4. 6.

(l) Rom
10. 8.

(m) Mal. 3.
5.

(n) Joh. 6:
45.

(o) Isa. 54.
13, 14.

must come to that of God in them ; But these Teachers deny this Doctrine, and have manifested themselves several wayes to all sober minded People, to be men not fearing God, and are not true to their Principles; for who have minded them, and seen their Carriage and Behaviour in all these Changes that have been these 8. years (which have been many, as may be further manifest,) for there have been Changes of Governments, of Parliaments and Protector's several in these Eight years, and all these have been warned not to uphold these Priests contrary to Peoples Consciences, but that every one might have their Liberty, that they that would have them might maintain them, and they that could not receive their Doctrine, might not be forced to maintain them; but this would not satisfy their Covetous Practice, but they went on in the way of Cruelty, Persecuting and Oppressing the Innocent, and casting into Prison, and took trebble Damages, and spoiled their Goods, and made Havock of poor Peoples Encrease and Fruits of their Labours; neither would the Magistrates hear, but suffered them to go on in their Persecution, and upheld them by a Law to the oppressing of the Innocent, until the Lord by his mighty Power overturned them, and broke them one after another; and those Priests turned to every Power, and every Government, as it turned; and made Petitions, and Addresses, and Acknowledgements to every Change of Government, and Conformed to every Power, and shewed much Love and Zeal to every present Power for their own ends, though many of them were Instruments to throw others out; Yet through their Deceit and Subtilties have kept themselves in, in all these Times, and Changes.

Now let any honest hearted People judge, whether these be sound Principled men, that can turn, conform, and transform to every Change according to the Times? Whether these be fit men to Teach People? But their Fruits are manifest, and God doth discover them more and more, that they cannot proceed much longer; Their Folly is so much made manifest, they have used their utmost endeavors to cause Persecution to continue upon us: But, the Lord hath seen it, and we commit all to him, & can freely say, *The Lord forgive them for what they have done to us,* (p.) But for the bearing our Testimony against them for the deceiving and betraying of poor ignorant People that are blind, and led by them that are blind into the ditch, (q) We cannot but in pitty and love to Peoples Souls bear our Testimony against them, Therefore have our Sufferings been be-

cause

(p.) A.B. 7.
66.(q.) Mat. 15
14.

cause we desire the good of all People, and the Salvation of their Souls; and this is all we desire, and Suffer for, that all might come to the knowledge of the Lord, who said, They should all know him, from the least to the greatest. (r)

We are a People that follow after those things that make for Peace, Love, and Unity, it is our desire that others feet may walk in the same, and do deny and beare our Testimony against all Strife, and Wars, and Contentions that come from the Lusts that warr in the members, that warr against the Soul, which we wait for and watch for in all People, and love and desire the good of all; for no other cause but love to the Souls of all People, have our sufferings been, and therefore have we been numbered amongst the Transgressors, and been accounted as sheep for the slaughter, as our Lord and Master was, who is the Captain of our Salvation who is gone before us, who though he was a Son, yet learned he Obedience, by the things that he suffered, who said my Kingdom is not of this World, if my Kingdom were of this world, (s) then would my Servants fight, but my Kingdom is not from hence; This is he that comes to save mens lives, and not to destroy them, (t) and this is he that is our Lord & Master, whose Testimony we must seal with our blood, if it be required of us; And our Weapons are not Carnal but Spiritual, (u) who have given our Backs, our Cheeks, and our Hair to all professions, out of the Life and Power to be smitten, who have done it to purpose, which the Lord hath overturned, who were often warned by us, under whom we have undergon cruel sufferings. And now You are come up into the Throne to be tried, we cannot but warn you in your day to do justly, and to love Mercy (w) whereby the violence of the wicked might be stopt, which is for your own good, and prosperity. And so we desire and also expect to have the liberty of our Consciences and just Rights, and outward Liberties as other people of the Nation, which we have promise of from the word of a King, that we may not be made a prey upon by the prophane envious People and Priests which we have born our Testimony against their corruptions, who thirst not onely after our Estates & Liberties, but our blood also, who have already begun to search our Houses and to apprehend our Members, & cast them into Prison, there to be kept without bail or mainprize, under pretence as if we were Thieves Murderers or Traytors, who are Enemies to no mans Person upon the Earth, which they cannot lay to our charge, whereby they endeavour to take away our lives.

Treason, Treachery, and false Dealing we do utterly deny, false dealing, surmizing,

(r) Heb. 8.
11.

(s) Joh. 18
36.

(t) Luk. 9.
56.

(u) 2 Cor.
10.4.

(w) Mica.
6.2.

or plotting against any Creature upon the Face of the Earth, and speak the truth in plainnesse and singlenesse of heart, and all our desire is your good, and Peace, and Love, and Unity, and this many thousands will seal with their blood, who are ready not onely to believe, but to suffer, but only that the blood of the Innocent may not come upon your selves through false informations.

Given forth the 5th of the
4th Month, 1660.

Margret Fell.

WE in the Unity of the Spirit, and Members of Christ, do Subscribe, and Witnesse to the Truth of this, and in the behalf of those in the same Unity,

George Fox
Richard Hubberthorne,
Samuel Fisher,
Joseph Fuce,
Gobert Sikes,
Amos Stodert,
William Caton,

Gerrard Roberts,
John Stubbs,
Thomas Coveny,
Thomas Harte,
James Strut,
Ellis Hookes.

And now I am here to Answer what can be Objected against us on the behalf of many Thousands, who are Baptized with one Spirit into one Body, to bear my Testimony, and to be offered up for the Service of the Faith, and to give an Account of the Hope, that is in me, to every one that Asketh according to the Scripture, who was moved of the Lord to leave my House and Family, and to come Two Hundred Miles to lay these Things before you; Who to the Will of the Lord is Committed.

M. F.

THE END.